1: Burrows--164
116, 177, 212, 797

(1947-48)

Woleaians
Ifalik

"The name 'Yfaluc' appears in a list of names of islands collected by the Spanish Jesuit priest Paul Clain from 1678 to 1696; but the Spanish, though they were settled on Guam in the 17th century, and had some claim to all this part of the Pacific, never visited Ifalik, so far as available evidence shows. During the 19th century they sent missionaries to most of the islands round about, but for some reason omitted this one. The people of Ifalik know about these batre (padre), and how they opposed the native religion. In 1947 some visitors from Woleai rather pointedly stayed away from a native religious ceremony held on Ifalik during their stay. This was understood as the effect of a missionary's work on Woleai long ago, and caused no comment.

Traces of Spanish or missionary influence on Ifalik are few. Perhaps the most important is the system of writing known to some of the natives. It came to Ifalik from Woleai, where it was taught by a missionary. Maroligar knew enough of it to keep a note-book in which he had written some song texts. The letters were obviously derived from our alphabet. I did not attempt to learn or analyze this writing. It seemed to be adequate for recording the text of a song, but was known only to a few, and very little used even by them."

2: Damm et al. --212-216 (1909) 1938 Woleaians
116, 212, 176, 802 Faraulep

The Faraulip natives use a peculiar script (see Figs. 279, 280) which is very similar [213] to the Polowat writing; they also have their own numerals, which the chief Saueeru invented. He teaches them to the young men, who put them to practical use in their copra dealings with the Japanese. The signs were derived from tattoo patterns and Japanese characters which the chief had taken from Japanese newspapers. [CS: Omission of illustrations of writing, and of the numerals, pages 212, 213, 214, 215, 216].

32: Brown--89-90
116, 212, 174

(1913) 1914

Woleaians-1-3
Woleai

"In July, 1913, I paid a visit to the small reef island, Oleai, or Uleai, or Wolea, of one of the most westerly of the Caroline group. One of the chiefs squatted, at the suggestion of Herr Runge, the only European on the islet, and wrote a sentence in the script of the island. A few week [sic] ago I received from Mr. Runge a full list of the characters written by the chief, Egilimar. There are fifty-one, and evidently each represents a syllable, as will be seen by the accompanying copy of the list. Alongside he has also written Runge, Brun, and Egilimar in the script; and it will be seen that two, if not three, of those employed to write the last name are not given in the list. It is manifestly a syllabary, as is the Katukana of Japan, and a script that was invented in Korea some centuries ago, but never drove out the Chinese ideographs. But none of the characters have any resemblance to these. Nor do they resemble in any respect any of the alphabets we know, European, Levantine, Arabic, or Devanagari. The only other script known in the groups or islands of the Pacific is that of the Easter Island tablets. But they are ideographic; many of them according to the interpretation of them supplied to Bishop Jaussen, of Tahiti, by one of the learned men of the Easter Islands, bear resemblance to the form of the thing they represent, though it is affirmed also that they were but mnemonic suggestions of the beginning of a word or line of the hymns or lyrics sung at the annual festivals. They are but one stage beyond the ideographic hieroglyphs on the one hand, and serve the same purpose as the knots in the quipus of ancient Peru and of

the Pelew Islands.

This Oleai syllabic script is one stage further on in development towards an alphabet. Most of the characters are highly conventionalised, but some retain a resemblance to the thing to which their name or sound corresponds. In the [90] second column, the seventh from the bottom, schrü means in the language of the islet 'a fishbone,' and the character has manifestly originated in a representation of a fish; the fifth from the bottom, lö, means 'a bottle,' and evidently the character retains something of the form of the coconut water-vessel. In the first column, the sixth, fifth, fourth, third, and second from the bottom have a hint of what their syllable indicates; ngä meaning 'bamboo,' boa 'ulcer,' warr 'canoe,' raa 'mast,' uh 'sail.' So in the third column, the first, rã, means 'a saw'; the second, lüh, 'a young coconut'; the third, sthah, 'a knife.' In a few others there might be found by stretching the imagination a hint of the thing indicated by the syllable. But the majority of the characters can be connected by no possibility with the meaning of the sound indicated.

The script is now known only to five men on the islet; but it is probably a relic of a wide usage in the archipelago. There is no possibility of any one of the five having invented it, and if invented by them since Europeans arrived it would have taken the forms either of the European alphabet or of the things bought or sold, of whose names and

numbers they wished to keep a record. If anyone wishes to compare this with such a script invented for commercial purposes, he should look up Furness's The Island of Stone Money; on page 138 is given a copy of an account kept by a native of Yap for trade purposes; and this native Fatamak, a sorcerer, I can personally testify, is a man of keen intelligence. A comparison will bring out the gulf that separates the two scripts. This Oleai script is manifestly the product of long ages for the use of the organisers of a highly-organised community of considerable size. In other words, it must have belonged to the ruling class of an empire of some extent, that needed constant record of the facts of intercourse and organisation."

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958
OR21 Woleai OR21
Ifaluk

whether they died in infancy (before they could walk) or later. The ninety-two women of childbearing age or older had had 253 children, of which 151 were still living. Of the 104 deaths, sixty were either stillbirths or infant deaths, which is a high infant mortality by modern Western standards, though probably lower than that of most of the crowded Oriental civilizations.

The menstrual history of every woman was public knowledge on Ifaluk because of the custom of retiring to the menstrual huts. Tufai for a woman, then, has the definite meaning that she has passed menopause, has completed her reproductive history. We got the reproductive history of twenty-eight of these elderly ladies. They had born a total of eighty children, or an average of 2.8 each. Eight of them had had no children; one of them had had ten; most had had two, three or four.

The Ifalukians, like most people who lack a written language or system of records, had amazing memories, and I think that our histories for these women are reasonably accurate. It is difficult to interpret them precisely, of course, because of our lack of data on movement to and away from the island, and the like. Clearly, however, the population is hardly maintaining itself. The Ifalukians loved children, seemed always to want children. I could not, however, get away from a suspicion that the low birth rate reflected some sort of deliberate contraceptive or control practice, beyond such conventional taboos as the prohibition of sexual intercourse during periods of fishing. The language problem, the delicacy of the subject and our reluctance to appear to be prying into personal matters, prevented us from getting any definite information.

The population question in the Pacific is a matter of general concern. All of the islands—Polynesian, Micronesian, Melanesian—showed a great decline in population through the 19th century. The islands had probably been almost free of contagious disease before the explorers, traders, whalers and other Westerners started roaming the Pacific, bringing smallpox, measles, venereal diseases, tuberculosis and the like along with them.

The consequences were devastating, and only in recent years have introduced medicine and sanitation started to counteract the effect of the introduced diseases. Until quite recently, I suspect that most cul-